

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

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INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 4887

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PO YO

SUBJ: PORTUGUESE AMBASSADOR TO YUGOSLAVIA

REF: OSLO 1968; LISBON 3398

1. DR. FRANCISCO RAMOS DA COSTA, ONE OF THREE FOUNDING MEMBERS OF PORTUGUESE SOCIALIST PARTY (PS) AND INTIMATE COLLABORATOR WITH PS LEADER (AND FONMIN) MARIO SOARES, IS NEW PORTUGUESE AMBASSADOR TO YUGOSLAVIA. UNCLASSIFIED BIO INFO FOLLOWS: BORN SEPT 10, 1913 IN ALFARELOS (COIMBRA); DEGREE IN ECONOMICS AND FINANCE FROM TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF LISBON; NOTED ECONOMIC AUTHORITY AND AUTHOR OF SEVERAL SPECIALIZED WORKS IN BOTH PORTUGUESE AND FRENCH; DURING 13-YEAR EXILE IN PARIS WAS CONTRIBUTOR TO NUOVEL OBSERVATEUR AND LE MONDE; HAS TRAVELED WIDELY IN WESTERN EUROPE AND, AFTER APRIL 25, WENT ON MISSIONS REPRESENTING PS TO VARIOUS EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AND JUNE 6 WASHINGTON MEETING OF NORTH ATLANTIC ASSEMBLY; WAS OBSERVER AT SEPTEMBER EFTA GENEGA MTG; PARTICIPATED AS PS REP ON PORTUGUESE DELEGATION TO RECENT GENERAL ASSEMBLY SESSION (COMMITTEE ON SPECIAL QUESTIONS AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY), WHERE HE DELIVERED WIDELY NOTED DENUNCIATION IN BEHALF OF GOP OF SOUTH AFRICA'S RACIAL POLICIES.

2. FOLLOWING BIO MATERIAL IS CLASSIFIED:

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A) YOUTHFUL BACKGROUND: RAMOS DA COSTA WORKED AS A SHEPHERD IN

HOME TOWN UNTIL AGE 11. MOVING TO LISBON, HE WORKED AS "CHASSEUR" IN VARIOUS RESTAURANTS, WORKING HIS WAY UP TO CHIEF RECEPTIONIST AT AVENIDA PALACE HOTEL. AT ONE TIME WAS DIRECTOR OF AVIZ HOTEL. HOLDING DOWN JOB BY DAY, STUDYING BY NIGHT, HE OBTAINED DEGREE AT AGE 27. HE LATER BECAME BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL CONSULTANT AND SPECIALIST ON INSURANCE AND EMIGRATION. WAS FOUNDER OF "BOLETIM DE INFORMACAO ECONOMICA E FINANCEIRA" OF BANCO PINTO DE MAGALHAES.

B) ARREST RECORD: PIDE (SECRET POLICE), SUSPICIOUS OF DA COSTA BECAUSE OF HIS INTEREST AND WORK IN LABOR AFFAIRS, PREVENTED HIM FROM PURSUING TEACHING CAREER AT TECHNICAL UNIV. FIRST (OF 8) JAILINGS OCCURRED AT AGE 20 1(1934). IN 1946 HE WAS ARRESTED WITH 140 OTHERS WHILE TRYING TO HOLD A LABOR MEETING (IMPRISONED FOR 3 MONTHS).

C) POLITICAL EVOLUTION: A MEMBER OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY (PCP), RAMOS DA COSTA SERVED ON ITS CENTRAL COMMITTEE FROM 1945-52. HE LATER ABANDONED IT, ALLEGEDLY AFTER BECOMING DISILLUSIONED WITH COMMUNISM. AFTER ABORTIVE JAN 1, 1962 BEJA REVOLT, HE WENT INTO EXILE (PARIS) EVENTUALLY JOINING MARIO SOARES AND TITO DE MORAIS IN FOUNDING PS. HE NOW SERVES ON PS'S POLITICAL DIRECTORATE. PRIOR TO POSTING TO UNGA, HE TEMPORARILY HEADED PS'S FOREIGN RELATIONS DEPARTMENT. HE IS NOT AN IDEALOGUE, IS IN PS'S RIGHT WING AND OPPOSES PS/PCP ELECTORAL ALLIANCE.

D) POLITICAL FUTURE: ALTHOUGH A VALUABLE PS FUNCTIONARY, WE UNDERSTAND THAT OTHERS IN PARTY CONSIDER HIM TOO OLD TO BE VIGOROUS CAMPAIGNER. IN EFFECT POSTING TO BELGRADE CONSTITUTES REWARD FOR YEARS OF FAITHFUL SERVICE, NOW TO END BY BEING PUT OUT TO PASTURE. HOWEVER, DA COSTA REPORTEDLY EXPECTS TO STAY IN YUGOSLAVIA ONLY UNTIL MARCH 1975 CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS WHEN HE WANTS TO RETURN TO RUN FROM COIMBRA. "I FEEL CAPABLE OF DOING THE JOB FOR WHICH I WAS NOMINATED, AND AT SAME TIME BEING A CANDIDATE TO THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY".

E) PERSONAL MISCELLANY: DA COSTA SPEAKS FLUENT FRENCH, READS AND SPEAKS ENGLISH WELL. HE SEEMS TO BE IN GOOD HEALTH FOR HIS AGE, A GLASSY APPEARING LEFT EYE HIS ONLY APPARENT INFIRMITY. HIS WIFE, MUCH YOUNGER THAN HE, IS ATTRACTIVE AND COMES FROM PORTIMAO (ALGARVE). DA COSTA IS INTERESTED IN REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, IN PAST HAVING ASKED EMBOFF FOR INFO ON TVA. FRIENDLY, OUTGOING, ENTHUSIASTIC AND CONFIDENTIAL

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NOT PERSONALLY ANTI-AMERICAN, HE HAS BEEN VALUABLE EMBASSY CONTACT. AS RESULT PAST WORK IN PARIS DONE FOR ARAB BANKERS, HE NOW HAS CLOSE FRIENDS IN ARAB WORLD. HE HEADED PS DELEGATION TO TUNISIA IN LATE SEPT 1974 TO ATTEND 9TH DESTOURIAN PARTY CONGRESS.

3. EMBASSY BELIEVES EMBASSY BELGRADE WILL FIND DA COSTA A USEFUL CONTACT. DA COSTA WILL LIKELY BE FLATTERED AND RESPONSIVE

SHOULD MEMBERS OF US MISSION SEEK HIM OUT.
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